

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SINGAP 03987 130647Z
ACTION H-03

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY
SECSTATE WASHDC 8533
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AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OREP (VANIK, CHARLES A.)
SUBJ: CODEL VANIK: SINGAPORE VISIT SEPTEMBER 8-10

REF: (A) TOKYO 13590, (B) HONG KONG 10784

1. CONGRESSMAN VANIK AND HIS WIFE, ACCOMPANIED BY TWO CON-
STITUENT BUSINESSMEN, THEIR WIVES AND THE DAUGHTER OF ONE,
VISITED SINGAPORE SEPTEMBER 8-10. CODEL WAS MET ON ARRIVAL
IN THE EVENING OF SEPTEMBER 8 BY THE AMBASSADOR AND OTHER
MEMBERS OF THE EMBASSY STAFF.

2. MORNING SCHEDULE SEPTEMBER 9 BEGAN WITH A BREAKFAST MEETING
WITH THE AMERICAN BUSINESS COUNCIL (LOCAL EQUIVALENT OF AN
AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE). CONGRESSMAN VANIK QUERIED
HIS HOSTS ABOUT THEIR PROBLEMS WITH THE U.S. CUSTOMS SERVICE
AND LISTENED PATIENTLY TO THEIR STANDARD COMPLAINTS ABOUT
SECTION 911. HE EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE MAXIMUM TAX RELIEF
THEY COULD REASONABLY EXPECT WOULD BE ANOTHER YEAR'S DEFERRAL
OF THE NEW PROVISIONS. AT THIS MEETING AND IN OTHERS DURING
THE DAY THE CONGRESSMAN WAS ACCOMPANIED BY HIS TWO
CONSTITUENTS.

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3. LATER IN THE MORNING CONGRESSMAN VANIK MET WITH
THE AMBASSADOR, THE DCM, AND ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL-
POLITICAL SECTION STAFF FOR AN INFORMAL BRIEFING/
DISCUSSION ON SINGAPORE-U.S. AND REGIONAL TRADE
MATTERS. DISCUSSING TEXTILES, VANIK SUGGESTED SINGAPORE
WOULD BE WELL ADVISED NOT TO PRESS TOO HARD FOR A LARGER

QUOTA BUT TO SETTLE FOR THE HONG KONG LEVEL. HE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN SINGAPORE'S ADVANCED SOCIAL WELFARE STRUCTURE, ESPECIALLY ITS CENTRAL PROVIDENT (SOCIAL SECURITY) FUND AND ITS HEALTH PLAN.

4. VANIK SPENT SOME TIME AT THE MEETING DISCUSSING INDONESIA AND GSP. HE SAID HE HAD FAVORED EXTENDING GSP TO VENEZUELA AND ECUADOR AND THAT HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONSIDER ADDING INDONESIA AND NIGERIA AS WELL, ALTHOUGH HE FORESAW A GREATER PROBLEM IN SEEKING TO EXTEND IT TO IRAN AND THE ARAB STATES.

5. FOLLOWING THE EMBASSY MEETING, VANIK VISITED THE U.S. INTERNATIONAL MARKETING CENTER (IMC) TO OBSERVE AND BE BRIEFED ON ITS OPERATION. WHILE HE DID NOT COMMENT DIRECTLY ON RECENT CONGRESSIONAL CRITICISM OF THE IMC'S, HE ASKED THE EMBASSY CONTROL OFFICER TO ACCOMPANY ONE OF HIS CONSTITUENTS, WHO WAS NOT ON THE ORIGINAL VISIT, ON A RETURN TRIP TO BE BRIEFED BY THE IMC DIRECTOR. (THIS WAS DONE.)

6. THE IMC VISIT WAS FOLLOWED BY A SMALL LUNCH HOSTED BY THE DCM, ATTENDED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S DIRECTOR FOR REGIONAL AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND A SENIOR OFFICIAL OF THE TRADE DEPARTMENT. BOTH GOS OFFICIALS DISCUSSED THE PROBLEMS SINGAPORE FACES IN A WORLD GROWING MORE PROTECTIONIST. FOLLOWING THE LUNCH, THE CODEL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VISITED THE TEXAS INSTRUMENTS ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS ASSEMBLY PLANT. AFTER DISCUSSING WITH THE MANAGER THE INTEGRATION OF U.S. AND FOREIGN LABOR INTO TT'S FINISHED PRODUCTS, VANIK COMMENTED THAT THE PLANT WAS "CERTAINLY NO SWEATSHOP."

7. THE AMBASSADOR HOSTED A DINNER FOR THE CODEL ON THE EVENING OF SEPTEMBER 9. GUESTS INCLUDED THE GOS MINISTER OF FINANCE, DIRECTORS OF THE TRADE DEPARTMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD, CHAIRMAN OF THE SINGAPORE GARMENT MANUFACTURER'S ASSOCIATION AND RESIDENT AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN. THE GOS GUESTS LISTED WITH GREAT INTEREST TO VANIK'S DISCUSSION OF U.S. POLICAL TRENDS, AND REPEATED TO THE CONGRESSMAN SINGAPORE'S DESIRE FOR A RELAXATION OF TRADE BARRIERS.

8. ON SEPTEMBER 10 THE CODEL MET BRIEFLY AT THE EMBASSY WITH A NUMBER OF LOCAL BUSINESSMEN WHO REPRESENT AMERICAN FIRMS TO DISCUSS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARKETING CENTER. THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY A VISIT TO THE SINGAPORE TEXTILE INDUSTRIES PLANT, WHERE DISCUSSIONS CENTERED ON THE SINGAPORE INDUSTRY'S

INCREASING COMPETITION FROM LOWER WAGE-COST COUNTRIES.
THE CODEL DEPARTED FOR TAIWAN EARLY IN THE MORNING
OF SEPTEMBER 11, SEEN OFF BY THE AMBASSADOR.

9. COMMENT: CONGRESSMAN VANIK INDICATED THAT THE
PRIMARY PURPOSE OF HIS EAST ASIA TRIP WAS THE STOP
IN JAPAN. FURTHER TO REF B, HE SAID THAT THE U.S.
STEEL INDUSTRY IS FACING THE IMMINENT LAY-OFF OF 35,000
WORKERS, MANY IN HIS STATE. HE EXPECTS THAT HIS TALKS
WITH THE JAPANESE WILL CENTER ON THE THEME THAT IT
IS IN THE JAPANESE STEEL INDUSTRY'S SELF-INTEREST TO EXERCISE
RESTRAINT IN STEEL EXPORTS TO THE U.S. AND TO CREATE A
MORE ORDERLY EXPORT SYSTEM. HIS FREQUENT COMMENT WHEN
DISCUSSING PROTECTIONIST TRENDS IN THE U.S. WAS THAT ORDER
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AND STABLE RULES OF THE GAME ARE THE PRIMARY FACTORS IN
A GOOD BUSINESS CLIMATE.

10. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE ENTIRE PARTY WILL CONTINUE
TRAVELING WITH CONGRESSMAN VANIK TO TOKYO. THE OTHER
MEMBERS OF THE PARTY ARE MR. AND MRS. HARRY STONE, VICE
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, AMERICAN GREETINGS CORPORATION;
MR. AND MRS. JACK BARES, PRESIDENT, SPECIALTY HAND TOOLS;
AND MS. LISA BARES, MR. BARES' EIGHTEEN YEAR OLD DAUGHTER.

11. BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE CONGRESSMAN VANIK ASKED THE
AMBASSADOR SEVERAL TIMES TO WRITE CHAIRMAN ULLMAN TO
SUGGEST THAT HE PAY A VISIT TO SINGAPORE. THE
LETTER IS BEING POUCHED.
HOLDRIDGE

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